

The Muse.

A CHARACTER.
BY J. T. FIELDS.

O, happy he, whose riper years retain
The hopes of youth, unclouded by a stain—
His eye of life in calm content shall glide
Like the still stream to its ocean side.
No gloomy cloud hangs o'er his tranquil day,
No meteor hovers him from his home away—
For him there glows with glittering beam on high
Love's changes star that wins him to the sky;
Still to the past he turns, and smiles to trace
The smile of childhood, and the mother's face.
And dreams, perchance, as in his earlier years,
The low, sweet music of her voice he hears.

BE ALWAYS GIVING.

The sun gives, ever, to the earth—
What it can give in many ways—
The ocean gives in many ways—
Gives bolts, gives fishes, rivers, seas;
So too, the air, it gives us breath,
When it stops giving, comes in death.
Give, give, be always giving,
Who gives not, is not living.
The more you give,
The more you live,
God's love hath in us wealth unequalled,
Only by giving it is realized.
The body withers, and the mind,
If pent in by a selfish rind,
Give strength, give thought, give deeds, give self,
Give love, give tears, and give thyself.
Give, give, be always giving,
Who gives not, is not living.
The more you give,
The more you live.

The Story-Teller.

[From Holden's Dollar Magazine.]
THE SILVER ARROW.
A TALE OF SAVOY.

Upon the summit of a lofty cliff in mountainous Savoy stood the castle of Count Rudolph, frowning grimly in the midst of sunshine upon the peaceful cottages below. Stern, rough, and half-inaccessible, it was a fair type of its lord, the last Count of the line. And the sunny brightness, so lavishly poured upon it, was truly like the sweet influences of the young and gentle daughter. Father and child had the same name, but nothing more in common. Where sympathy is wanting there is little intercourse, so that while he regarded his daughter solely as his heiress, his repelling roughness caused her to look upon him merely as her guardian and natural protector.

In the deep narrow valley at the foot of the hill lay a humble cottage, buried in the shadow of its lofty neighbor. The old cottager, Melchior, was the minstrel and wise man of the whole barony. In those days, the offices were commonly united, and the harper, who delighted high-born lords and dames with his minstrelsy, was the repository of the peasants' unwritten lore, the story teller whom they always welcomed, the seer whom they revered. Melchior pretended to little of the latter character, except when it was forced upon him, or could be made advantageous to his interest. Albert, his adopted son, was a manly youth, deeply versed in the "gay science," and yet the master of a spirit well fitted to lead in the front ranks of strife. The hand, which ran so lightly over the gentle guitar, was hardest in the contest, surest in the blow. Well worthy was he to have been a pupil of Scott's warrior minstrel, "the jovial harper, who died at Jedburgh Auld."

"He brooked, not that, that scoffing tongue
Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,
Or call his song untrue;
For this, when the golden plectrum
And such rule tumbled had chafed his pride,
The bard of Roslin he flew.
On Tiviot's side, in fight they met,
And tumbled both, but chafed his pride,
Where still the thorn's white branches wave
Memorial o'er his rival's grave."

Of such mould were the minstrels of former days, equally ready to exalt their science with sweetness of voice or strength of arm. The adopted mother of Albert was foster-mother to the infant Countess Lilien, and from earliest childhood, notwithstanding the disparity of their conditions, an intimacy had grown up with their growth between the peasant's son and the daughter of Count Rudolph. She, the gentlest and loveliest of little maidens, was not the one to think of rank, and his strange wild heart burning with poetic fire, knew that it could disengage the friendship of none, even of the loftiest. And no dreams of love had entered the thoughts of either. Their ages were the same, but the matured soul of Albert naturally found itself sustaining her frailty and womanly spirit. This difference compensated for the equality in years, and placed him in the relation which man instinctively bears to the other sex. Their meetings had always been frequent, almost daily, yet neither of them ever dreamed of the inevitable result. Though the peasant's son and noble's daughter might be freely together as foster brother and sister, who could suppose they would dare to form a stronger tie?

They were now sixteen, and just arriving at a knowledge of the truth. The woman's nature of Lilien first perceived it, and her reserve, her absence from their place of meeting, and above all, the tone as she uttered the words: "We are sisters," conveyed it to Albert's mind. Though yet unworn in the world's ways, and trembling with the delicious consciousness of a first love, she had sufficient pride of ancestral birth to feel that they must meet no more. But Albert was more hopeful. He too saw the barrier between them, but he also saw the power of an invincible energy, and resolved never to yield his faith.

It was several days since they had last seen each other, and both looked eagerly forward to a grand fête which the Count was preparing to give his dependants. Such had been an immemorial custom in the barony, and one that he hardly dared to interrupt, though his taste was not in festivals and merry-makings for the poor. Perhaps he endured it less unwillingly, because the jovial unthinking tenor would endure a year of oppression more readily, after a single day of pleasure. Upon this occasion, fairs of wrestling and archery throughout the day, followed by dancing in the great hall of the castle, amused the people and delighted not infrequently the surly Count himself.

The morning of the festival dawned, and neither Countess Lilien or the young minstrel peasant imagined that their respective fates were crowded together within that single day. The great court of the castle was early thrown open for vassals as they assembled from every part of the barony. It was the only place near by which was well adapted for such occasions. From the walls of the castle itself, a long smooth plot of ground stretched even to the verge of one of those tremendous gorges, so common in that broken country. It was a feature between two portions of the small hill, running sheer down for an hundred feet, until where a mountain torrent dashed fiercely along over its rocky floor. The width of this fearful chasm was not more than thirty feet, and the two edges were connected by a

light movable bridge. This was the only defence of the castle on that side, and there, at least, made it almost impregnable.

The sports commenced, but Albert took no part and looked carelessly on the scene. Almost all his attention was directed towards the young Countess, in watching for a stray look, in receiving a chance smile, and more than once her shy innocent glance, resting on him for a moment, sent the blood thrilling swiftly through his veins. He busied himself for some time until a strange scene called his attention elsewhere.

There was a singular unskillfulness in the archers, and one that might have provoked a milder man than the Count. He himself was a fine marksman and felt the disappointment as keenly as could the unlucky competitors. At last as each seemed shooting worse than the one before him, he rose from his seat and coming hastily forward, seized a bow from a peasant's hand. But even his skill was not exempt from disgrace. The arrow struck the target nearer than any before it, but still at a most provoking distance from the centre. The Count shook with rage and shame.

"Bring forth my own cross-bow," he shouted, "and the silver arrow. I can do nothing with these awkward things. They, at least, will not fail."

"Beware, Count Rudolph," said Melchior, "the silver arrow is not to be used on light occasions."

"And why not, meddling?" He stamped with fury as he spoke.

"Remember, noble Count, that your ancestor received that arrow from a dealer in magic for a particular mystic purpose, and the time of that has long since passed. Think too of the fatal caution which accompanied the gift,—to use it only where life or death to the House of Rudolph was concerned, for when the shaft should find its mark, the unskillful archer should find it in his own heart."

"I am not the unskillful marksman whose arrow can miss," said the Count, sternly, as he received the shaft and bow. This arrow, which had descended through many generations to the heirs of Rudolph, was delicately moulded of virgin metal. The shaft was hollow and skillfully ornamented with strange characters, and aside from the magic powers commonly attributed to it, was indeed a sure weapon in the hands of a good marksman. The Count examined it reverently, placed it in the bow and turned to take aim.

In his agitation he did not carefully draw the bow string, and as he abruptly wheeled about, caught the string against his doublet, and, of course, discharged the shaft. It whizzed swiftly through the air and lodged in a tree, which projected right over the fearful fissure already mentioned. All hurried to the spot.

The trunk of the tree was only a few feet from the narrow bridge, but where it pushed its boughs broadly out, there was nothing beneath them, except the torrent which roared far down the cliff. The tree itself could be easily climbed by a hardy mountaineer, but unfortunately, the arrow had lodged in a dead branch, which seemed unable to bear the weight of a man. Any attempt from the land to loosen it would inevitably cause it to drop into the torrent.

At one glance the Count saw all the hazard of an attempt to regain the arrow. Yet as a work of magic, whose loss would be followed by a curse, he could not bear to lose it. Rather his castle, any thing, than that on which his life depended.

"Five hundred crowns," cried he, "to the man who will place the silver arrow in my hands!" There was a wailing buzzing among his retainers, but no one stirred. The Count marked this and knew what must be the price of such fearful danger.

"I will grant," he said, slowly and loudly, "any boon in my power and consistent with my honor, which he shall demand." At these words, he noticed a youth in the back of the crowd striving to break loose from those who would restrain him. The Count continued: "The reward shall be given by the hands of the Countess Lilien." Albert broke desperately from the grasp of his friends.

If success was in the power of man, his light, agile form seemed most likely to obtain it. It was easy to ascend the tree up to the point where the dead limb struck off from the trunk. Here he stopped a moment and coolly formed his plan. There was no other course than to advance boldly upon the rotten branch over head, and to return in the same manner. He stepped lightly and nervously forward. His eye was fixed upon the silver arrow, as it glittered before him, loosely hanging to the branch with nothing between it and the torrent but a hundred feet of air. He was reached and in the bold youth's hand. He had moved on without stopping, the decayed wood might have borne its burden a little longer, but the peasant's son and noble's daughter might be freely together as foster brother and sister, who could suppose they would dare to form a stronger tie?

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he was brilliantly illuminated, and thrown open for dancing. Count Rudolph was there, some-what more composed than he had been before, and left a few hours before.

But with a darker look the inspection seemed to her satisfactory, although the sequel proved that unfortunately for herself her olfactory nerves were not in the most perfect order, and she went to work immediately sprinkling the liquid about her chamber and over the bed clothes. Taking a quantity in her hands, she bathed freely her face and that of her husband, who was sleeping in total unconsciousness of all annoyances. Then with the thought of having done a laudable deed she returned to her bed, and was soon sleeping as soundly as her lord and master.

Mr. Smith—who was always an early riser—awoke the next morning just as the sun was poking his nose into the window, and, casting his eyes upon his spouse, instantly uttered an exclamation of surprise and sprang from the bed. The nose he made awakened Mrs. Smith, who screamed with affright at seeing a man with a face of a coal black hue, standing at her bedside; but her fright was changed to mirth on catching a glimpse of her own countenance in the looking glass. Matters were soon explained, and she found that the fluid she had mistaken for cologne was a bottle of very fine ink which Mr. Smith had just obtained and placed in the closet for safe keeping. The carpet, bed-clothes and furniture showed conclusively that the ink was, as warranted, one of the best articles in the market. Six mosquitoes were found dead on the floor or in an expiring condition, but although the effect upon them was so decided, Mrs. Smith has not been known to try the sable liquid since, and shudders whenever she sees an inkstand.

[Boston Journal.]

[From Neal's Gazette.]
THE RIPE CHERRIES.
A TALE FOR THE CHILDREN.

I am going to tell my young readers about a poor little bound girl. She was an orphan, and her parents had also been very poor, so that when they died, which they did very nearly at the same time, little Nelly, for that was her name, was left without a creature to take care of her. It happened, however, that a Mrs. Liston, who lived not far from her father's house, and had often noticed Nelly, as being a neat, clean, pretty behaved child, when she heard that she was left destitute, took her home and had her bound to her till she was eighteen. This, in many respects, was a happy change for the little girl, for she had now plenty of good food and warm clothing; besides which Mrs. Liston took a great deal of pains with her, to teach her to read and write, and above all to be a good girl. But in spite of all these things, it was long before poor Nelly felt as happy as she had done in her father's poor little cottage, for she could not help thinking of her parents, and what she had seen them suffer before they died, and the tears would often stream down her cheeks as she thought of them. At length, however, Nelly got her spirits up, and began to feel herself at home. Both Mr. and Mrs. Liston were very kind to her, and as they had no children of their own, they soon became so fond of her, that they treated her more as if they were her father and mother than her master and mistress; and never was kindness better bestowed, for Nelly was so grateful that she felt as if nothing was too much for her to do to please them. The only servant they had besides her, was a boy about fourteen years old; whose chief business it was to work in the garden, to go of errands, and to take care of Mr. Liston's horse; but though at the time we are going to speak of Nelly, she was only eight years old, she was so active and industrious, and so careful to do whatever she was told, that Mrs. Liston often said she was more use to her than many grown girls had, and that she was twice her age. One day Mr. and Mrs. Liston were going away to a considerable distance, and would have to be several hours from home. Before they went, Nelly was told what work she was to do while they were absent, and as soon as she saw them off, she began to work very diligently, thinking she would surprise her kind mistress by doing more than she expected. She worked away for a long time as happy as a little queen, only stopping now and then to watch the blackbirds which were collecting in great numbers on a fine Mayduke cherry tree, growing close to the house; for the little thieves had found out that the fruit was ripe, and were determined to have a good share of it, and made a wonderful chattering noise over the work. "I wish Mrs. Liston had pulled the cherries before she went away," said she to Sam, who happened to come into the house just as she was watching them. "I am afraid these birds will have them all destroyed before she comes back." "They shall not have them all," returned Sam, "for I am come here to purpose to get some of them." "Were you told to pull them?" asked Nelly. "No, but I am going to pull them for all that. We will have a good feast, and will blame it all on the birds, if they are missed." "I would not taste one of them for the world," said the girl, "unless it was given to me." "Then you are a great fool; but I guess you will change your mind when I bring down a basket full." "No I shan't," said Nelly; "and I would advise you not to touch them." As the child spoke she took off a nice new apron that she had on, and put it into a drawer of the kitchen table; and then putting on an old one, she took some pans that she had been told to clean, and went down to the run with them; for she wished to be out of the way. After she was gone, Sam climbed up the tree, and having filled his basket, came back into the kitchen, and stuffed himself till he could not eat another cherry. But after he had done this, he began to think of the danger of being found out, and considered a long time how he must manage to conceal what he had done. At last a thought came into his head; it was a wicked thought, but what will not those do who once venture to steal!

Nelly had just got her pans scoured and the kitchen cleaned up, when Mr. and Mrs. Liston came home. The young girl was delighted with the praises she received for her diligence, and had just been told by her mistress to wash herself and put on her clean apron again, when Mr. Liston came in, and asked who had been stripping the cherry tree. Poor Nelly's face turned as red as fire, for she durst not tell a lie, and could not think of accusing Sam. "Have you been up the tree, Nelly?" asked Mrs. Liston. "No, ma'am," replied the child, with a steady look and firm voice. "Did you see anybody pull them?" asked the husband. "No, sir," and Nelly spoke truth, for she had gone to a part of the tree where she was out of sight of Mrs. Liston; "It is very strange," said Mrs. Liston; "however, put on your apron, Nelly, and go and set the dinner table." Nelly went to the drawer where she put her apron, but it was not there. "Why do you stand in that manner?" asked the mistress, struck with the strange look of the child, "where is your apron?" "I don't know, ma'am." "Where did you put it?" "In this drawer, ma'am," said the child; and she pointed to the drawer where she had put it. "That is a lie," said Mrs. Liston, "you are a wicked girl, and I am going to punish you." "I am not a wicked girl," said Nelly, "I am a poor little orphan, and I am doing my best to please you."

By this time the old woman's countenance was turned fully towards me, and by the dim light of the feeble fire, I could see that there were tears of thankfulness upon her cheeks. She looked at me for a moment, and then she said: "You are a good girl, and I am going to reward you."

"The Lord sent it if the devil brought it!"

You may be sure I vanished instantly, while Tom clapped his hands, and shouted, "Good! good! too good! too dear! but the old lady was too much for you that time!"

With sundry other expressions of like tenor, I tried to laugh with him as we went home, and did laugh, perhaps as loud as he did, but somehow or other, the laugh didn't appear to do me any good. [Exchange.]

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With sundry other expressions of like tenor, I tried to laugh with him as we went home, and did laugh, perhaps as loud as he did, but somehow or other, the laugh didn't appear to do me any good. [Exchange.]

PORTER IN WISCONSIN. A writer in the Lafayette Republican courts the muses after this fashion:—

"Tis sweet to see the road, the frog,
The fly and the poll-worm;
But sweeter far to see the muses,
To lay my hand on Sally's knee."

apron?" "I don't know, ma'am." "Where did you put it?" "In this drawer, ma'am," said the child; and she pointed to the drawer where she had put it. "That is a lie," said Mrs. Liston, "you are a wicked girl, and I am going to punish you." "I am not a wicked girl," said Nelly, "I am a poor little orphan, and I am doing my best to please you."

By this time the old woman's countenance was turned fully towards me, and by the dim light of the feeble fire, I could see that there were tears of thankfulness upon her cheeks. She looked at me for a moment, and then she said: "You are a good girl, and I am going to reward you."

"The Lord sent it if the devil brought it!"

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